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Communities in ACTION

A bimonthly magazine about the War on Poverty

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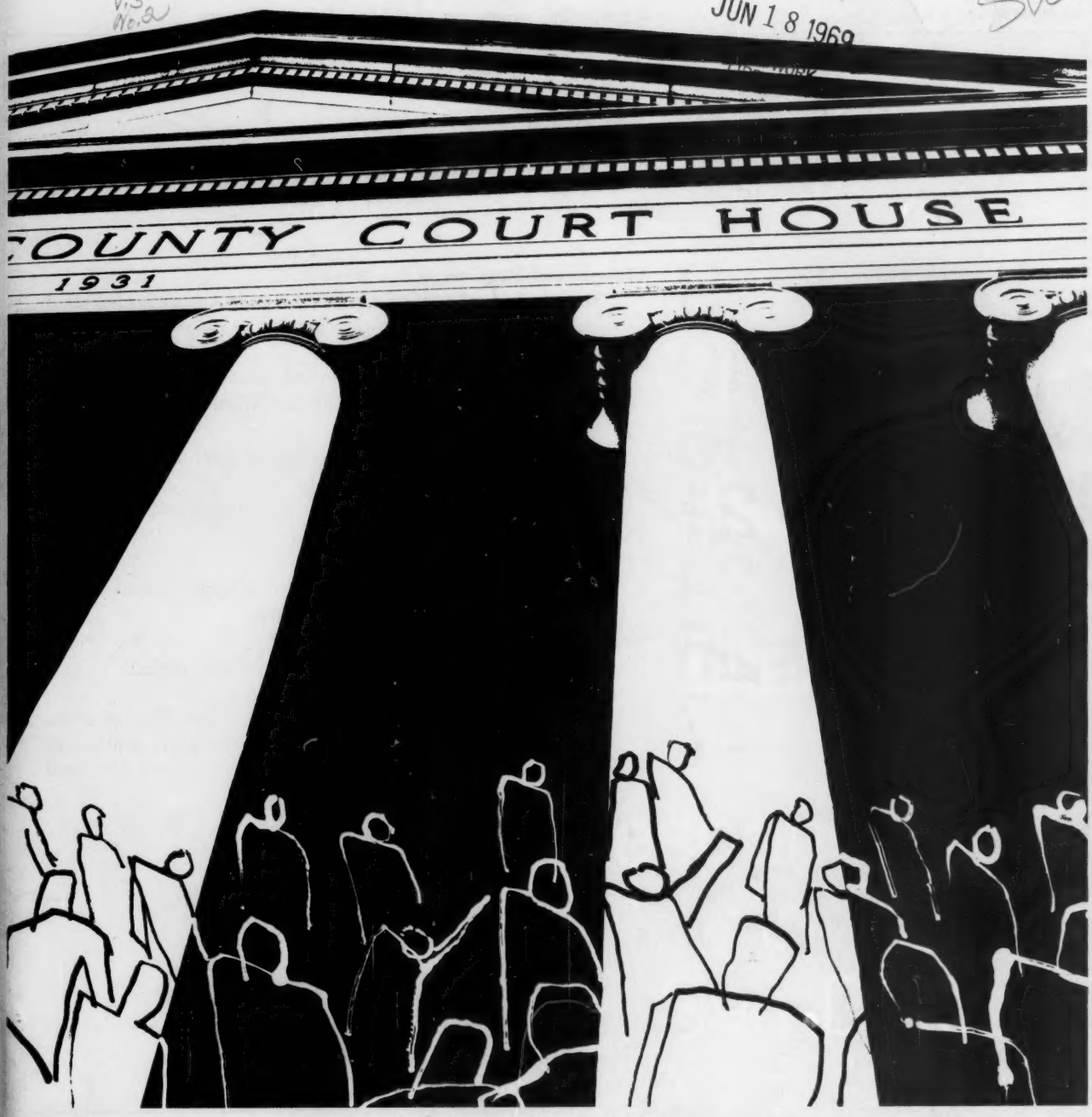

Poor people and changing institutions: what's happening

Edward O'Hara, Editor

April 1969/Vol. 5 No. 2

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3 **Dialogue and Response in San Diego**
The true story of how a Community Action Agency made public and private institutions more responsive to the people.

10 **Shock and Revival in a Western Town**
After mine closing leaves many out of work, poverty agency helps breathe new economic life into Washington State town.

16 **The Waiting Game**
How fishermen outwit mullet in Tampa Bay. A photo story.

21 **It's Called Democracy**
Poor people plunge into political mainstream and show they can swim as well as anybody.

24 **"Thank You, Upward Bound"**
A poignant essay by a Kentucky girl on what Upward Bound has meant to her. By Sherry Brashear.

26 **What Good, If Any, Is Community Action?**
A few well-chosen facts about a controversial subject.

27 **Newsline**
Nixon keeps OEO, shifts Head Start, Job Corps. Harlem opens discount meat and furniture stores. Detroit holds seminar on how to operate franchise businesses. U. S. court finds Maryland maximum welfare grant unconstitutional.

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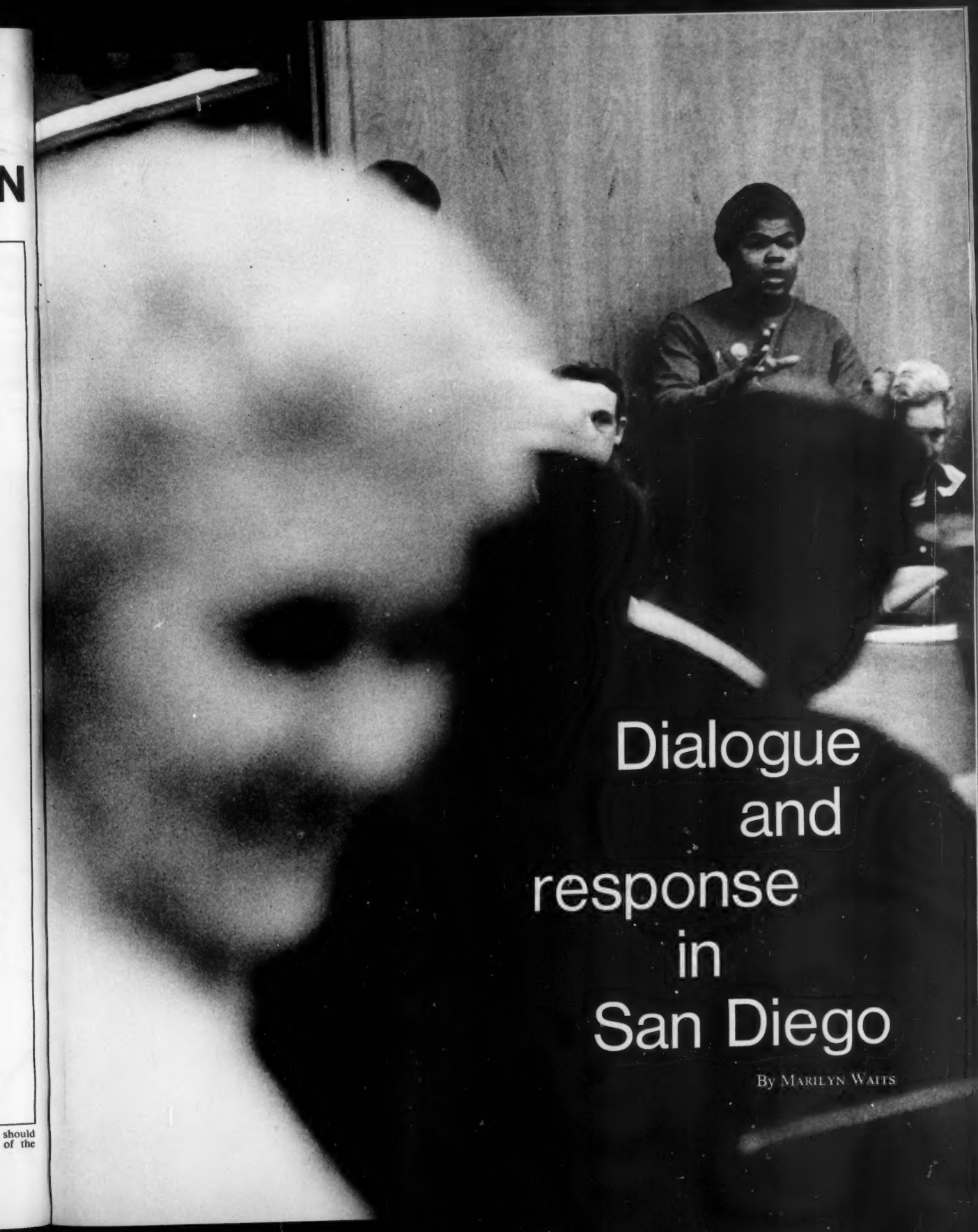


Dialogue and response in San Diego

By Marilyn Waits

San Diego celebrates its 200th birthday this year. If birthdays make people conscious of change, then perhaps cities should do some reflecting too.

Although the local antipoverty program is just three years old, it has clearly made an impact on how a traditionally conservative city deals with its impoverished citizens.

A recent conversation in an elevator at City Hall reveals how much things have changed. The city's Director of Community Development, Kimball Moore, entered an elevator on the fifth floor. Recognizing a passenger, he said, "Excuse me, but aren't you Charles Bullard? I heard your presentation on welfare at the mayor's Friday dialogue a few weeks ago, and I was very impressed." The two men shook hands.

Three years ago Charles Bullard was on welfare and worked nights in a laundry to feed his wife and six children. Today Charles Bullard is executive secretary of the Emerson Community Action Council, one of thirteen operating under San Diego's Economic Opportunity Commission. And city officials recognize him in public.

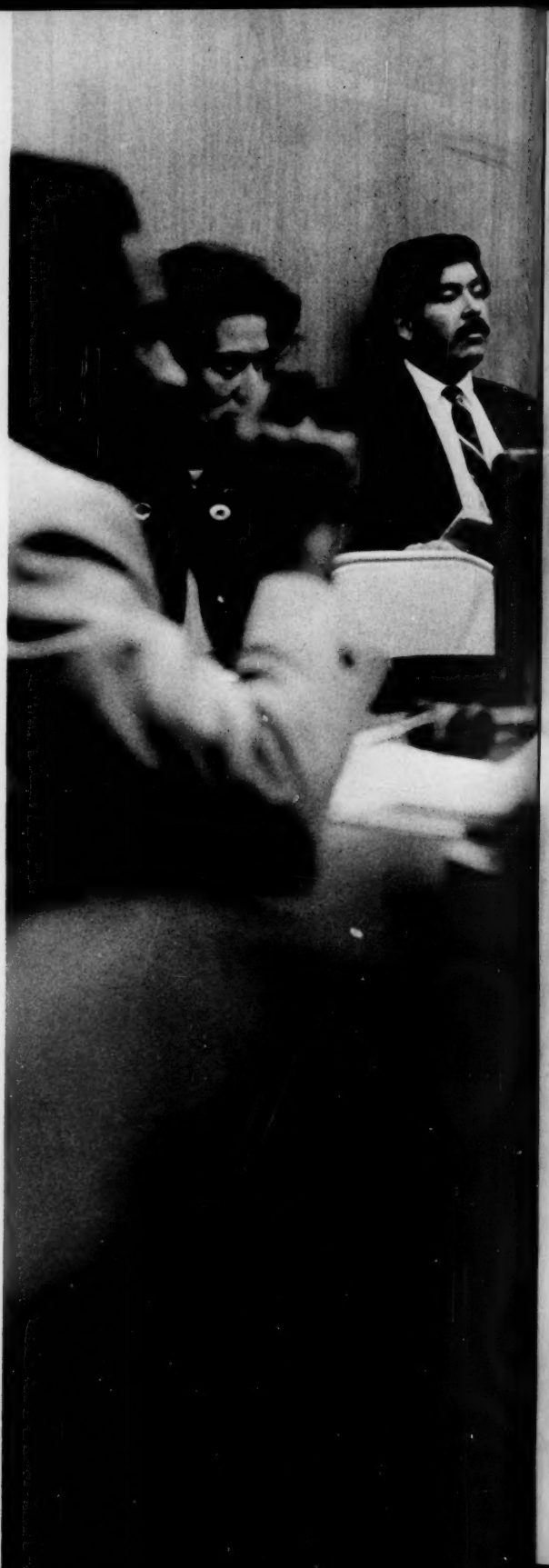
What was the "mayor's dialogue?" Mayor Frank Curran holds an open meeting every other Friday to

"The white leadership was told, 'you must listen.' And now it's fashionable to listen."

which the public is invited. Many who come are poor people, who are no longer afraid to speak out about their problems. The dialogues began two years ago at the urging of the Community Inter-racial Council, an independent group funded by the city. Through the dialogues Bullard and others like him are bringing government in closer touch with local communities.

The work of the antipoverty commission and its delegate agencies has had a substantial influence on urban renewal, food for the poor, welfare policies, the united fund agency, minority representation in the City Council, and in giving the poor a voice in public decisions.

Top EOC officials, Director Jack Katz and Board Chairman Charles Reid, convinced the City Council that San Diego should apply for the Model Cities program, and EOC has been deeply involved in planning the program. In a county where welfare applicants are interviewed by the District Attorney's office, some objectionable welfare practices have been eliminated. The EOC's offer to distribute surplus food through its centers was a key factor in persuading the San Diego



County Board of Supervisors to approve a commodity distribution program. The United Community Services is taking an entirely new look at its role in serving the poor after participating in summer youth programs and has committed $150,000 for demonstration projects in poor areas of the county. The United States Navy, a major institution in San Diego, sent out Seabee teams to build teen centers last summer, gave free medical exams to children going to camp, and took a Sea Explorer Scout troop on a two-week ocean voyage.

Some of the changes have been the result of many factors, including the antipoverty agency and the new climate of opinion it has helped to create. And that's what Community Action is all about—working with other local institutions.

"San Diego is now at the stage other cities were six years ago," says Ruben Dominguez, assistant director of Neighborhood House, an EOC delegate agency. "But, in San Diego, this is progress. For years this city's image of itself was that no real poverty problem existed here. Now that's changing."

San Diego County, the size of Connecticut, is California's second most populous county. Since 1940 the population has multiplied fourfold to the present 1,369,000. Fifteen percent, about 200,000 people, are poor. They include a majority of San Diego's 80,000 black citizens and of its 110,000 Mexican-Americans. The county has huge military and industrial establishments; over 50 percent of the land is government-owned. Politically, the county is staunchly Republican.

In a politically conservative environment, the Economic Opportunity Commission has sought to meet the needs of San Diego County's poor.

Director Jack Katz has focused on building independent community councils. The antipoverty commission was set up outside the political power structure of the city and had no power except what it could generate by organizing the poor. Thirteen local neighborhood councils now exist—six within the city and seven in rural areas surrounding it. They have been gradually accepted by the city as the legitimate voice of the neighborhoods they represent.

"The challenge for EOC was to get unity between the blacks and Mexican-Americans, a common issue they could rally around," says Dominguez, who, as EOC's Area Development Director for three years, was instrumental in developing the councils. That rallying issue came last year with the proposed appointment of a non-white to the City Council. Two Council positions became vacant, and the Council decided to ask for applications from candidates and to appoint replacements, rather than having a special election. This move was crucial because an election probably would have chosen a white person. In southeast San Diego, the city's largest low-income area, blacks and Mexican-Americans mobilized the community and held nominating conventions. They joined to support two candi-

dates, one black and one Mexican-American. The black man, Leon Williams, was selected by the Council. Next September, he will have to run for re-election, first in the district primaries, then at-large in the city. But even if he is not re-elected, there was progress in the Council's recognition that minority representation was needed.

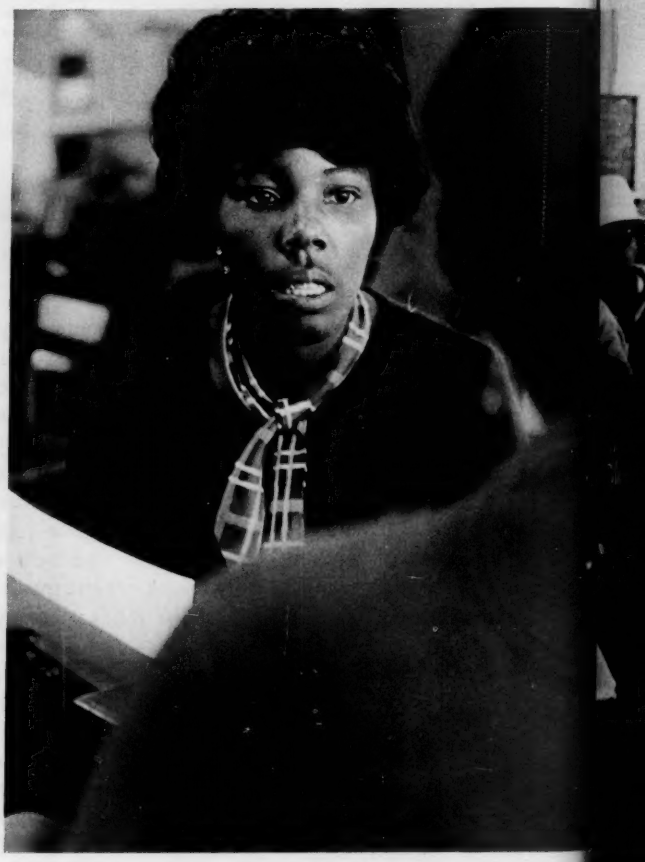
Two other non-white appointments to city government reveal the recognition that San Diego's poor have gained. Low-income citizens participated in the selection of the Model Cities Director and of the Coordinator of the Mayor's Committee on Youth Opportunity. In fact, the Youth Coordinator was selected after pressure from Community Action Councils throughout the city caused the mayor to rescind an earlier appointment and allow the poor to take part in the selection process.

The EOC performed an important public service in advocating a Model Cities program. In January 1968's monthly report to the Board of Directors, Director Katz and Chairman Reid first suggested the city should be urged to apply for a Model Cities grant. With the board's agreement, Katz and Reid began a personal campaign of visits, letters and discussion with each City Council member on the proposal and what it could do for San Diego. Once the council agreed to draft a proposal, the agency's staff and low-income representatives were on the 25-man committee that wrote the proposal. Ruben Dominguez worked almost full-time helping to complete the proposal before the deadline.

The grant was made in September, 1968. The 30-member Citizens Advisory Committee which was then set up has 18 representatives from the six neighborhood councils and twelve members from organizations located in or serving the target area. The committee was charged with selecting the Model Cities staff, reviewing the proposed organizational structure, and recommending how to establish a Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee.

To select candidates for staff positions, the Interim Committee organized into screening and interviewing boards. This required the Civil Service Commission to work directly with the poor. To the surprise of the officials, the poor demanded higher qualifications from the applicants than the Commission. From more than 40 applicants the screening committee narrowed the choice to three. One of them, John Williams, a Negro, was then selected as director by Kimball Moore, Director of Community Development. The same procedure will be followed in selecting people for the remaining 23 positions, although the permanent committee will do the screening and Williams will make the final selection. Ten of the 23 positions will be outreach workers from the target areas.

"EOC made the poor feel they can speak up in other organizations and they will be heard."



Seattle-born Marilyn Waits, who wrote three stories for this issue, was a secondary school teacher in New York State and Arlington, Va., after earning a masters degree at Yale. She is a staff writer for OEO.

The future relationship between the neighborhood councils and Model Cities Citizen Participation remains uncertain. Kimball Moore wants to see OEO continue funding the councils, but to have them incorporated into the Model Cities program and report directly to the Model Cities staff. "Let's face it," he said. "OEO has not always had the programs for citizens to participate in. With Model Cities there is a more meaningful role for community involvement. The Citizens Advisory Committee would be a clearinghouse for all federal money coming into the area." Director Katz sees a more independent role for community councils. A series of meetings in the next few months will help determine the eventual make-up of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Twenty thousand poor people in San Diego County will receive food under a new commodity distribution program that began in February. Food going to those who need it is a direct result of efforts by the EOC. Starting in 1967, the agency documented the fact that some poor people were not getting enough food. The EOC and another interested group recommended to the County Board of Supervisors that it initiate a food distribution program. The County board studied the problem for a year, but took no action. San Diego had neither a food stamp nor a commodity distribution program. In May 1968, the commission's board publicly urged the supervisors to adopt a food program. Chairman Reid and neighborhood council leaders testified at county hearings in favor of food for the poor. When the county board approved a surplus food program, one critical factor was that the poverty agency offered to handle distribution through its neighborhood councils and centers. The commission's handling of distribution is saving the county some $60,000 a year in costs.

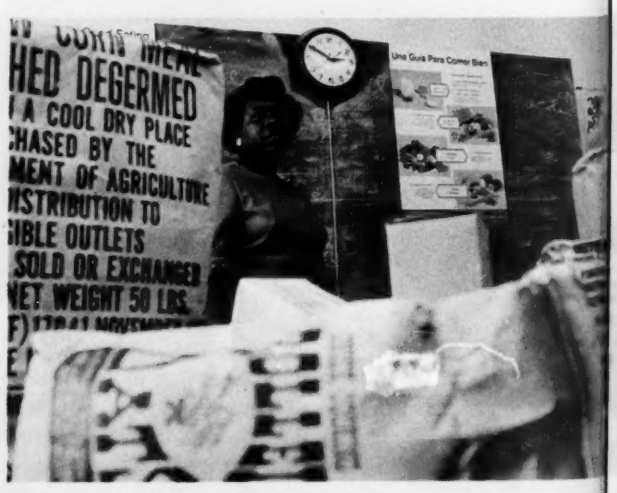
United Community Services, the charity fund-raising agency, is building into its programs citizen participation—learned from experience with the antipoverty commission. The fund agency joined with the antipoverty commission in 1967 to persuade the mayor to form a council for summer youth programs. The youth council included low-income citizens and screened all proposed programs. UCS agencies carried out some of these programs, using antipoverty funds.

At summer's end the council became permanent to plan for the next year. The mayor secured funds to hire a coordinator and appointed a part-time director. Because the appointment was made without consulting the community, the neighborhood councils successfully demanded that Mayor Curran appoint a full-time director from a group of candidates approved by representatives of the poor. Henry Hodges, the present director, was selected by Mayor Curran from the names submitted by the youth council.

When OEO funds for 1968 summer programs were cut back, United Community Services stepped in and committed $150,000 of its funds to the program. The previous summer's involvement had increased contacts between the southeast community and UCS delegate agencies here. The mayor supported the need for UCS funds. And several agency board members were active in the Urban Coalition where contact with black leaders convinced them of the need for summer programs. A committee from UCS agencies worked closely with the Mayor's Committee to screen and select the summer programs. "This way," says Claude Townsend, Associate Director of the agency, "the concept of citizen participation was built right into the new UCS involvement."

Last year the antipoverty board issued a statement calling on United Community Services to reexamine the role of all its agencies in serving the poor. The fund agency is now doing so. Task forces will examine each agency's program. "We are asking our agencies to establish priorities for the first time," explained Thompson. "We have already seen definite changes in involving minority residents on the boards of our delegate agencies. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA have all responded, and Family Services has opened a branch office in the southeast." To encourage delegate agencies to create new programs, UCS has committed $150,000 for demonstration projects in poverty areas of the county.

The impetus for welfare policy changes sprang directly from the neighborhoods. The neighborhood councils of EOC worked with the Welfare Rights Organization to obtain fairer treatment for recipients.



While there is no structural connection between EOC and WRO, the two groups frequently work together on the grassroots level. Cross-membership of poor people who are active in both groups has resulted in mutual involvement. Charles Bullard and his wife are examples. Both were known in the community for their activities with the welfare rights group, which led to Mr. Bullard's selection as executive secretary of the Emerson Community Action Council.

The Welfare Rights Organization, with neighborhood council help, has improved welfare practices. One of the first targets was a paternity questionnaire that unnecessarily demanded personal information from welfare mothers. The welfare rights group held a well-publicized public hearing where the questionnaire was read aloud. The reaction was sufficient to bring about a revision in December, 1967, so that intimate questions were withdrawn.

Previous welfare policy also included an automatic cutoff if an anonymous person complained about a welfare recipient. With welfare rights pressure, this policy has been changed so that the check is not stopped until the investigation is complete and the director authorizes the termination. Because of the organization's continuing scrutiny, investigators are more careful about obtaining a search warrant before checking on recipients. In the past welfare applicants in San Diego were interviewed first by the District Attorney's office. It used to be that the DA could instruct the Welfare Department to deny aid if the applicant was "uncooperative." Now, if an "uncooperative" charge is filed, the caseworker examines the client's explanation, and the case is reconsidered by the department.

Last March to broaden understanding of welfare problems the Welfare Rights Organization persuaded the district welfare chief in the southeast area to meet monthly with welfare recipients for an information exchange.

San Diego is a Navy town. And Uncle Sam's Navy is helping San Diego fight poverty. In the first summer youth program in 1967 the Navy opened its pools for swimming. But lack of adequate supervision created problems with base personnel. So the Mayor's Committee on Youth Opportunity sought Navy help in planning a second summer. Eleven Navy officers and personnel joined the committee and the results showed it. Besides opening the pools again, the Navy provided free medical examinations for 2,000 children sent to camp. Navy personnel took a Sea Explorer Scout troop for disadvantaged teenagers on a sea voyage that lasted two weeks. Seabee teams cleaned up and rehabilitated five buildings used as teen centers, using surplus materials from the base. Neighborhood mothers cooked lunch for the Seabees and the home cooking did a lot to cement new friendships.

The Navy has also started hiring more poor people. For two-and-a-half years the Naval Air Station has conducted job training under the antipoverty agency's Tac Starter Project. Hard-core poor people have received job training as auto mechanics, stock control clerks, keypunch operators, and other skilled positions in a six-month program which was designed with the help of the Navy Employment and Training Supervisor. Twenty-six graduates of Tac Starter are permanently employed at the Air Station.

Changes in the State Employment Service have also opened new jobs to the hard-core poor. The antipoverty agency and its neighborhood councils have made it easier for the Employment Service to contact and place unemployed teens and adults in jobs. The Employment Service runs a Youth Opportunity Center in San Diego, where teens from 16 to 21 can come for job information. The antipoverty agency has office space in the center and recruiters for Job Corps are located there. Since 1966 the Employment Service has sent mobile teams of job counselors to EOC neighborhood centers once a week to contact teenagers and inform them of job openings. "For the first time," says Eldon Rowe, center manager, "the neighborhood centers and the community action councils have given us really useful contact points in getting the communities informed about jobs. More people are beginning to see the Employment Service as a service for the disadvantaged than they used to."

In a city where welfare applicants are interviewed by the District Attorney's office, some objectionable welfare practices have been eliminated.

And more people are beginning to realize that the poor and the city can help one another. That's what it's all about.

As Claude Townsend, United Community Services put it, "EOC made the poor feel that they can speak up in other organizations and they will be heard. The white leadership was told, 'you must listen.' And now it's fashionable to listen."

More than just listening, San Diego is responding.

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Shock and revival in a western town

By Marilyn Waits

In mountainous northeast Washington State in the peaceful town of Chewelah, the closing of the magnesite mine last year was a terrible shock. Suddenly 125 men were out of work. Suddenly the whole town was worried. Then the community went to work. In the next eight months, the Northeast Washington Community Action Association found new jobs for 80 men. Most of the others laid off were old enough to retire. Recently a new garment factory opened in the town, thanks to the efforts of residents and the antipoverty agency.

Averting economic disaster is not easy when a town's one big employer folds up, but thanks to community cooperation and planning, Chewelah (pop. 1,526) succeeded where other towns have fallen into poverty and stagnation. And its success is measured in far broader terms than simply finding a new industry to replace an old one. In the process, the whole community geared up to help—and what's happening is pretty remarkable:

■ Chewelah (pronounced Chew—EE—lah) is not stopping at one new factory. It is working toward an industrial park of small industries to broaden the town's economic base.

■ Community interest caused passage of an $30,000 bond issue—in a town where bond issues rarely pass—to buy the National Guard Armory to house the new garment factory.

■ Looking for a labor force for the new factory, housewife volunteers signed up 1,000 women in 13 days who were willing to work—many of them from low-income families and most of them never able to work before because job opportunities for women were almost non-existent in the area.

■ Seeking job training for the women, the new Chewelah Industries went to Spokane Community

College, 50 miles away. One thing led to another, and the college is now offering, in Chewelah, not only the necessary sewing course, but a variety of adult education courses never before available there.

■ Chewelah is setting a stimulating example for other communities in the tri-county area.

In Chewelah, and elsewhere in the tri-county area, the agency has created changes:

■ The Community Action Agency has made a policy of pooling its resources with other agencies, to do together what none of them had the funds to do alone—teaming up with the State Employment office and the school system in Colville, for example, to conduct a successful summer job hunt for teenagers, or paying the school social worker's salary for the three summer months so that her work with Head Start children and their families may continue uninterrupted.

■ The CAA is getting into comprehensive long-range planning. Under contract with the Stevens County government, its newly hired planner-director is developing health, mental health and economic development plans for the county.

Chewelah has seen a lot of community action since that black day only a year ago when the mine shut down. Then, people talked seriously of moving away. In this rural area, new jobs were hard to find. Middle-aged men who had worked twenty years at the same job were unnerved at the thought of job hunting.

Chewelah's crisis was more dramatic than most, but the town's economic problems are shared by the three counties served by Northeast Washington CAA. Located in the corner of the state, bordering Canada and Idaho, Stevens, Pend Oreille (Pon-da-ray), and Ferry counties share a mixed economy based on mining, lumbering, and small farming. Resources are plentiful, but the complex problems of marketing them profitably are often insurmountable for small communities.

The CAA began relocating the men put out of jobs by the mine closing, a difficult task because the average age of the miners was 56. Supported by the National Council on Aging, the CAA received a special OEO grant to hire three mine workers as job developers for Chewelah. Colville's State Employment office gave them training, and the United Steelworkers local leased office space to the men. They made resumes for each man seeking new employment and systematically approached employers, matching job openings with skills. Local employers, responding to the crisis, expanded to make room for a new man or two. With this coordinated effort, 80 men had been relocated by November. The remaining 45 retired early or went into business for themselves.

During the first weeks after the announcement of the shutdown in

"Before the mine shut down, the people never worked very well together because each group was out for its own end."

Chewelah, efforts to do something revolved mainly around finding a way to keep the mine open. Town meetings where held, but no action resulted. Ernest Brannon, director of Northeast Washington CAA, attended one of the first meetings and began working with an informal steering committee of about nine town leaders. Brannon suggested that the town needed outside help from economic experts. He contacted the Northwest Training Center in Portland, Ore., an OEO grantee, and a two-day community development workshop in Chewelah was set up to bring in consultants to advise the town.

"The biggest thing that workshop did for us," says Jerry Chalmers, chairman of the steering committee, "was that we finally realized we had to take action ourselves. Nobody was going to do it for us. We had to find resources within the community and expand them. Before the mine shut down, the townspeople never worked very well together because each group was out for its own end. People were too concerned with the status quo. The shock of the mine closing gave them a common goal so they would cooperate with each other."

A more tangible result of the workshop was the suggestion about setting up the garment factory on a subcontract basis from a national manufacturer. Twenty men in the town were approached and agreed to put up $1000 each to get the factory started. The twenty incorporated into Chewelah Industries, Inc. Within days the work force had been recruited, and excitement spread through the town. When the National Guard Armory came up for sale in August, Chewelah Industries persuaded the Town Council to put up a $30,000 bond issue to buy the building, then lease it to house the factory. One elderly woman in Chewelah who lives on $80 a month from Social Security said it was the first bond issue in thirty years she had voted for.

All of the first 25 women hired for the factory were from low-income families. For their training, a board member of Chewelah Industries contacted Spokane Community College, which was offering training classes for sewing machine

operators. The college held open fifteen slots for women from Chewelah to enter the four-week course and has since moved the classes to the town. Bookkeeping, welding, typing, and shorthand have also been added to the extension courses offered in Chewelah.

The garment factory began producing children's jackets in February. Chewelah Industries located 26 acres of land outside the town that could be developed into an industrial park and persuaded the Chewelah Development Corporation to buy the land. Several interested companies have asked about the site.

The improved economic outlook has impressed other towns in the tri-county area, towns which can follow Chewelah's lead. The CAA has encouraged other towns to follow Chewelah's example. In nearby Pend Oreille County, the Selkirk Development Council, organized with Brannon's help, is exploring economic potential for its area. Selkirk, a consolidated school district involving three scattered towns, covers the northern third of Pend Oreille County and includes 15,000 people. The present economic picture is not encouraging.

Zinc, lead, cement and lumber are the main products in the Selkirk area. But the zinc-lead is low-grade ore, rail transportation costs are high, and zinc prices compete in a world market where Australia and South America can supply ore more cheaply than Pend Oreille County. The miners were on strike six months last year, and when the mine opened again, the work force dropped from 160 to 80. Cement factory work is seasonal, and automation has cut the work force from 200 to 60 in the past few years. Construction of two dams during the early 1960s provided a local market for the cement, but now it must be shipped out, and Seattle plants can ship rock more cheaply from Alaska or California than to haul it by rail over the mountain range that divides the state in half. Lumber is plentiful, but the big lumber companies cut it in Pend Oreille and sell 75 percent of it in Stevens County where prices are higher.

Selkirk's economic potential includes an overproduction of saw logs, cheap electricity, and excellent hunting, fishing, and recreation areas. Like Chewelah, Selkirk is looking to small industry as one answer to its problems.

The Selkirk Development Council said its interest is limited to economic development, but it soon began talking about education and housing. CAA Director Brannon sees this tie-in of related problems as a natural result of the emphasis on economic development, and it is one of the reasons this CAA is focusing much of its efforts on economic growth.

The Association has proven a valuable new resource in health, employment and education. It has joined with other agencies to coordinate funds and personnel, including the Employment Security office, the Colville School District, the Stevens County Mental Health and Retardation Department, and Stevens County Health Department.

Northeast Washington CAA is the first in the state to develop a cooperative program with a local branch of the State Employment Security office. In Colville, the Stevens County seat and headquarters for the CAA, the 1968 summer youth employment program grew out of meetings between CAP, the Colville Public Schools, and the State Employment Security office. Because the school district had only limited funds available under the Federal work-study program for high school students, school officials delegated the program to the CAA, which then provided funds to hire four low-income students as job developers for teenage employment. In turn, the four students—one boy and three girls, all juniors—were given three days training by the Employment Security manager, Marvin Ray.

Teenagers helped establish hiring procedures and survey the attitudes of young people in the area. The advisory group was made up of student leaders, representatives of the target groups and adults interested in teenagers. Daily one of the four went to the local radio station to tape a short broadcast covering job openings and the names and towns of teenagers seeking work. They counselled teenagers who came to the SES office looking for summer work and contacted employers in a 50-mile radius around Colville to learn of job openings. During the month of July, the 200 employer visits these three teenagers made constituted 20 per cent of all the employer visits by SES throughout the state. Although the program started late, in June, it placed 141 teenagers in summer jobs. This summer, the four students will continue their work. Ray has enthusiastically carried information about the program to state-wide Employ-

ment Security officials meeting to encourage similar programs elsewhere.

Brannon, who was a high school teacher, coach and counselor in Colville before he became CAA director, has found another way to coordinate CAA resources with the schools. Head Start needed a social worker during the summer months to work with families of children. The Colville schools needed a social worker to bridge the communication barrier between elementary teachers and the families of disadvantaged children. Using state funds for the culturally disadvantaged, the school system now pays the social worker's salary for the nine months of the school year. The poverty agency assumes her salary for the three summer months of Head Start. Mrs. Jan Bartleson, the social worker, had worked with the local Head Start two years, so her contacts with low-income families were already established.

The Northeast Washington agency is handling several important planning tasks. The CAA has hired a Planner-Director whose services will be shared with three Stevens County departments. CAA is developing a comprehensive health plan, a mental health and retardation plan, and an economic development plan—all of which are needed by the county government.

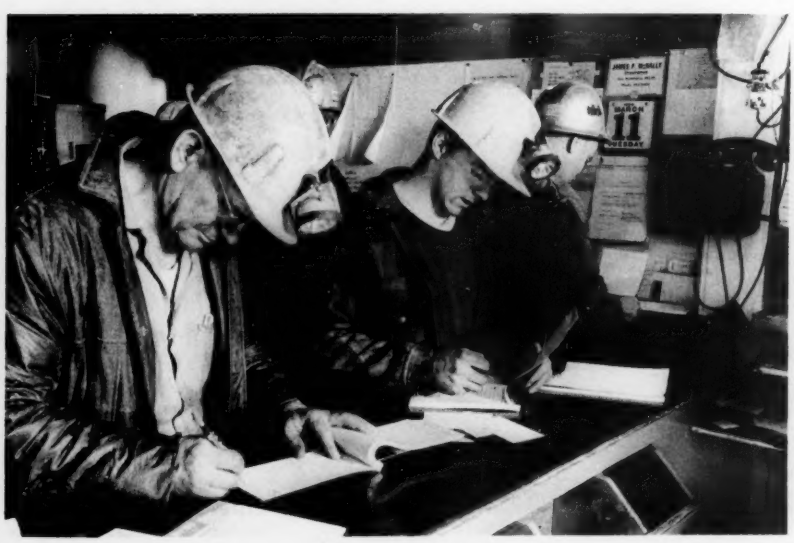
New Federal and state requirements for long-range planning on a regional basis prompted a meeting last year of Health Department representatives from Stevens, Pend Oreille, and Ferry counties. Each county was told to set up a council to do the planning. In Stevens County, local doctors suggested that the CAA be given responsibility for the plan. A task force of twenty health experts within the county will work with the CAA Planner-Director.

A similar request came from the Stevens County Mental Health and Retardation Department. Mental health services in the county now are limited to one psychologist who comes from Spokane once a week for child guidance work in a delinquency prevention program sponsored by the State Institutions System. The CAA Planner-Director will receive funds from the Mental Health budget to develop a comprehensive mental health plan for the county.

Neither agency alone could afford the salary of a Planner-Director with a master's degree in social work; together they can hire an experienced planner. And because CAA by-laws require low-income representatives on planning committees, the concept of community participation is spreading to county government.

The CAA's economic development plan for Stevens County will have long-range use for several programs coming into the county in the next few years. The State Department of Commerce has committed itself to focusing on rural problems and can help implement CAA plans throughout the three counties. The Economic Development Administration is negotiating a four-county economic development district to include Spokane and the tri-county area.

"We want to give people here the luxury of choice," says Brannon. "Right now young people see Seattle, Spokane and other cities as the only places of opportunity. We want to offer them something here, and comprehensive planning for new markets, co-ops, and small industries is the only way to get it."



"We want to give people the luxury of a choice . . . and planning for new markets, co-ops, and small industries is the only way to get it."

THE WAITING GAME

A Story by David Mangurian

Tampa Bay is becoming more polluted. Dredges filling shore land for housing are upsetting the fish and pleasure boats do little to calm them. The best spots are closed to them, open only to sport fishermen. Because of these problems, many sons take to the land, refuse to follow their fathers as fishermen.

Two exceptions are Steve and Raymond Mobley, of Ruskin, Fla. They work with their father, Jesse, 47, who learned the trade from his father-in-law. "He died right there on the boat—had a heart attack. I brought him on in," Jesse recalls.

Steve's been fishing "ever since I could get on the boat with my grandfather." Born with a short leg which was subsequently amputated, he uses an artificial limb, but gets along with his good leg and a crutch while on the boat. Raymond's been fishing ten years. The three-man team is considered one of the best on Tampa Bay.

Their fleet consists of two kicker boats that look like super row boats with wells cut in the middle to accommodate big outboards. The boats can hold 5000 pounds of fish.

The Mobleys often leave home at 4 a.m. to be at a fishing spot by sunup. They return home after dark. Weather's no obstacle. "I've been fishing when it was so cold the water turned to ice on the net when I hauled it out," says Steve, and there are other hazards. Jesse's arm is scarred from the time he tried to lift a shark out of the net and it bit him. Raymond has a sliver of bat ray spine in his wrist.

Still, they fish. They like it because "out here you're your own boss." But if fishing didn't pay, they would quit. And that's where the OEO-funded Florida Fishermen's Association, their co-op, comes in. Perhaps by working together, they can make a living.

The fish harvest varies with the time of year. In November the mullet appear—in "pods" of thousands. Once the pod appears, a fisherman with a good location can make $100 in a day. But such days don't come very often.

When I arrived at Mermaid Point just as the sun was coming up red over the bay, there would be the Mobleys sitting against a mound awake and cheerful retelling old fish stories. They never stopped.

"I wish they'd come out like they did that one night," said Raymond. "Remember? We heard something. I asked you what it was."

Jesse: "Yeh . . . and I told you to wait and you'd see."

Raymond: "They came down just like a boat, pushing a wave ahead of them. It wasn't just a little pod. They was darn near clear across the channel. There must have been 100,000 of them!"

"You'll see," said Steve, talking to me. "It's just like a black cloud floating on the water with fish bodies turning over glistening in the sun."

But the first day we didn't see one mullet. They drove me up to Papay's Bayou in their car at the end of the day to show me the mullet that were waiting in the bayou until they felt like coming down the channel.

We stopped and looked out 1½ miles across the bayou like a lake. There were irregular patterns glistening subtle shades of silvery purple and lavender from the setting sun.

"See that quiver out there?" Jesse said. "Oooh, they're out there." He spoke with the tone of a hungry man ready to eat.

I looked, strained my eyes. Only the irregular patterns on the water. What was a quiver anyway?

"There's a big bunch of 'em over there yonder. See 'em?" shouted Steve.

I still didn't see anything.

We drove around to the other side. Then I saw. Pelicans would swoop low over the water not far from shore and the water from wing tip to wing tip ahead of the pelican came alive with mullet turning on the surface. A car passed around the curve and the vibrations or something caused the same effect 15 yards off shore. There were mullet jumping here and there all over the bayou.

The second day was clear and warm and sunny like the first. According to the Mobleys, this wasn't weather. "Weather" was when the wind came out of the west meaning rain and the mullet would move out of the bayou. "Well, it could be tomorrow," said Jesse at the end of the day.

They kept telling fish stories, about the time they struck a bunch "two acres big," about the time one "pod" (bunch) of mullet after another came out of the channel and they struck mullet all night long.

But Jesse stopped predicting for me when they might come out and started chewing

at his fingers occasionally. Steve snoozed in the back of their car and Raymond sat around the bend by their boats with his uncle George Castillo and cousin Vernon Morgan.

"I'd rather they'd come out a little bit of them every day," said Jesse. "I'd settle for 1,000 pounds a day."

Raymond confessed once: "You lose so much sleep spending so much time over here not wanting to miss one hour thinking they'll come out in that hour if you go. And they will, too."

Finally the afternoon of the fourth day Steve banged on the window of my car to wake me from my snooze. "They're coming, they're coming," he yelled. "There's a pod of them coming right now. Get your cameras. Hurry!"

He was terribly excited. They all were. Jesse was barefooted running along the beach yelling at his boys. It was as if it were the first pod of mullet they'd seen.

Jesse and Steve followed the pod along the beach to the end of the channel, and watched the mullet swing around the bend up a short inlet. Raymond and Vernon Morgan took their kicker boats out to the tip of the point. George Castillo joined Jesse and Steve, talking to Vernon over a cheap walkie-talkie, giving him the position of the mullet. They were hoping a second pod of mullet would follow the first but it never came.

The pod of mullet maybe 30 yards across finally came out of the inlet and ran up the shore to where Raymond and Vern were waiting. Then Raymond and Vern struck, Vern first. The end of his gill net staked to the beach, he gunned his kicker boat and swung a semi-circle around the pod, the net rolling out behind the boat fencing the mullet off.

The mullet sprang out of the water by the dozens every second. This was the rally, when they try to crash through the net, then try to jump over it if they don't get caught. The net would only hold so many mullet before they'd carry it down.

In a flash, Raymond, who had been waiting in his boat inside Vern's net, gunned his kicker boat and rolled out his net in a semi-circle inside Vern's. Vern followed immediately with another swing around in his boat with another net.

The mullet continued to rally, flipping all over

the place. But by now they were trapped. They began to die down, more and more becoming entrapped in the net. Within 15 minutes it was all over.

The fun over, the work began. They slowly hauled in the nets full of mullet until one boat was close to sinking. "Roping" them in, they call it. They switched boats and filled the second.

Steve and George arrived in another boat, and the more tedious job began—"shucking," extracting the mullet from the nets. Before they finished, the storm—the storm that the mullet apparently knew was coming that brought them down the channel from the bayou—hit and it rained hard. And it turned cold.

But it was all normal for the Mobleys, and worth it—four days of waiting and they were finally really at work.

Forty-five hundred pounds they had caught—a lot, but not so much split five ways. About $50 each, not so very much either for three days of waiting and one day working.

The Mobleys keep trying. In other families, the way of life is dying out. C. H. Fletcher, a fisherman for 50 years, mends his nets quietly, and goes out fishing when the weather is good, but he seldom makes more than $25 a week. None of his sons went into fishing.

Whether their decision to leave, or the Mobleys' to stay, is the correct one, only time will tell. Without the co-op, the chances of success would be much smaller.

It's called Democracy

By Marilyn Waits

"Why don't Washington State business firms give credit for G.E.D. exams?"

The state legislator who was asked the question replied, "What's the G.E.D. exam?"

His response brought an exasperated groan from some 700 poor people in the audience.

Almost every poor person in the room knew what the G.E.D. exam was because many of them have taken it. G.E.D. stands for General Educational Development, a high school equivalency test to substitute for a high school diploma. Both the Federal and state governments spend a lot of money to help poor people pass the G.E.D. exam.

But, complained the woman who asked the question, after a poor person takes the courses, studies the lessons, and passes the test, he still cannot get a job because private industry in Washington refuses to recognize the G.E.D. as a valid substitute for high school graduation. The legislator admitted he was not aware of the problem, but promised to look into it.

The scene of this confrontation was a unique two-day Citizens Participation Conference, Jan. 24-25, in Seattle, Washington, sponsored by the state OEO "to give a voice to the poor." The conference was the idea of Byron Brady, the state OEO director. More than 700 poor people from all 28 Community Action Agencies in the state met to talk with state legislators and to draft proposals for needed legislation affecting the poor.

The amazing turnout—concrete evidence of poor people's willingness to work to help find solutions for their problems—was only one of the remarkable things about the conference. Anyone observing would have been struck by the classic picture of democracy in action, the invaluable personal contact and communication—a Negro welfare mother from Seattle's inner city deep in conversation with a conservative rural legislator, groups of old men with weather-beaten faces and plaid work shirts sharing lunch-hour discussions with rural teenagers seeking more job opportunities, quiet Indian women side-by-side with sign-waving migrant workers, all learning to understand each other's problems and to work together for solutions.

Also remarkable were the results of the conference. Besides the immeasurable value of opening channels of communication and concern, the conference produced nine specific legislative planks ranging from the hiring of public defenders to removing the sales tax on food and prescription drugs for Food Stamp users. And perhaps most important of all, it stimulated an interest in politics and self-help among the low-income delegates which is being translated into action all across the state, illustrating so well the principle of community action as it was originally conceived in the War on Poverty. For example, since January:

- A state-wide organization of poor people, formed from the conference steering committee and chairmen, has incorporated to lobby for legislation for the poor and initiate self-help projects. Usually one forms a lobby and then holds conferences.
- In Spokane the conference delegates returned home and formed a committee to educate the poor community about politics. At the first meeting 35 people turned out to hear a City Councilman and County Commissioner speak on local problems.
- In Wenatchee 100 people have come out to meetings every two weeks since the conference and are studying ways to solve local housing needs.
- In Seattle 75 people elected a steering committee to continue the interest generated by the conference, and 35 people went to the state legislature in Olympia to testify at a hearing on a proposed housing bill.

The key to the conference was its grassroots emphasis. Poor people planned it, ran the meetings, wrote and rewrote the proposals, and spoke to the legislators. And the self-confidence they gained through actively learning about the legislative process resulted in a determination to take a more active role in helping themselves out of poverty. Self-confidence grew also from the sense of unity generated when teenagers, senior citizens, Indians, and migrants joined to support one another's causes.

In a fiery keynote speech Fannie Lou Hamer, a founder of the Freedom Democratic Party and a voter registration worker in her home county in Mississippi told delegates, "You are not free in Seattle, Washington, until I'm free in Mississippi because no man is an island to himself."

Her hard-hitting speech set the tone for the conference. It was followed by a panel discussion with seven state representatives and four representatives of congressmen. The dialogue made several things clear. Legislators learned that poor people can be as articulate about their needs as anybody else. Poor people

discovered that legislators often are ignorant of the problems vitally important to them, as the G.E.D. query showed. But they learned too that politicians are willing to listen and learn when the issues are finally raised. The G.E.D. query showed legislators something else too; they understood better the frustration poor people feel when they get caught in the middle between government programs and conflicting business practices. The dialogue showed that poor people do know their own problems best, and political changes will not come until they speak up and demand change.

"Those legislators don't know your problems. You do."

With this conviction the delegates went off to plank committee meetings to hash out specific legislative proposals for the conference to vote on. Again they learned—this time from each other. It quickly became clear that some delegates understood only vaguely the purpose of the meetings; during afternoon sessions, one after another, people got up to talk about their personal wrangles with a welfare caseworker or a manpower training supervisor. Other delegates, many of whom had spent two months in local seminars to prepare for the conference, were angry and frustrated at what they considered a waste of valuable time spent listening to personal problems. Plank committee chairmen new to parliamentary procedures often could not successfully redirect the discussion back to the proposed legislative planks. Complaints about the afternoon meetings dominated many dinner table conversations, but with good results. When delegates reconvened that evening, they showed more concern for preparing the final planks, and the meetings were quieter, more orderly, and more productive. Some committees did not break up until midnight.

The dinner speaker was Theodore M. Berry, director of OEO's Community Action Program.

Mr. Berry stressed the importance of the conference as a demonstration of democracy in action. "Your presence here is proof positive that community action and citizen participation are here to stay. Poor people throughout the country have learned how to speak in such clear terms that administrations will hesitate to ignore your voice in decisions affecting your lives and families."

Self-help was stressed in a speech by Art Fletcher, Negro City Councilman from Pasco and recently defeated candidate for Lieutenant Governor of the state. Fletcher was instrumental in starting a black capitalism enterprise in East Pasco, where a poor people's corporation now owns a successful gas station and is building a shopping center. Having recently visited thirty major cities on a fact-finding tour for President Nixon on self-help projects, Fletcher's message to delegates was "get serious about self-help. Those legislators don't know your problems. You do. Let's have more self effort."

Judging from what delegates have started in their home communities since the conference, Fletcher's message of self-help took effect. In Wenatchee, a farming area in eastern Washington, the 40 delegates to the conference returned with a determination to arouse the low-income community. Meeting biweekly, they have elected officers and set up by-laws to act as an independent group with support from the Community Action Program. With 100 low-income residents turning out for meetings, the group has decided to focus on the crucial housing needs in the area. They have already contacted the Farmers Home Administration to get help for twelve families about to be evicted from sub-standard housing and to see about using FHA surplus housing near Moses Lake. The organization called Governor Dan Evans and sent two of its representatives to talk with him about state help for housing needs. The new group plans to coordinate its housing efforts with the local Technical Assistance Panel, which, at the urging of CAA Director Jerry Hudeen, is also focusing its attention on housing problems. Hudeen sees the new group as a means to strengthen Community Action efforts. With the new group concentrating on housing, the CAP is free to work on other problems. Also, the low-income membership of the new group gives it a more unified attitude toward poverty problems than has the more-representative CAA Board of Directors. The CAA Director, the FHA representative, and a planning consultant are members of both groups, although non-voting members of the low-income effort.

In Seattle, delegates from the conference got 75 people out to a meeting to organize a committee which will look into self-help projects for the group to undertake. Some members are going through all the bills

currently under consideration by Senate and House committees to determine which ones local legislators should be urged to support. When a hearing was held on a proposed bill which would make it possible for poor people to repair substandard housing or purchase new homes, the Seattle CAA organized thirty-five people to go to Olympia to testify in support of it.

In Spokane, conference delegates agreed the conference whetted their desire to learn more about politics, so they organized a Participation in Politics (PIP) education committee to arrange for speakers. In March, 35 low-income people came to listen to a City Councilman and a County Commissioner talk about local laws related to the poor. Each local representative to the state legislature was given copies of the planks adopted at the conference. Besides PIP, two other new groups in Spokane have grown out of the conference. A welfare rights group has held preliminary meetings to form an organization, and another group called MOMS, composed of mothers receiving Aid to Dependent Children, has formed to educate its members. MOMS has hired buses from the CAA neighborhood centers to pick up welfare mothers and take them shopping at large supermarkets where they can pay more reasonable prices than at neighborhood stores. They are also making plans for grooming classes and educational programs.

On the state-wide level the effort initiated by the conference is also being continued. The original steering committee that planned the conference, consisting of one member from each CAA in the state, has formed a permanent Citizen Participation for Progress organization. Besides the steering committee members and plank committee chairmen, the group includes two low-income representatives from each plank committee elected by delegates at the conference. The group has met twice since the conference at the state capital in Olympia and has filed articles of incorporation to make it an independent body. As an on-going non-profit corporation it can lobby for needed legislation in ways that the OEO agencies are restricted from doing. The corporation is making plans to apply to various foundations for grants to undertake antipoverty efforts in the state.

Just how much effect the conference had on state legislators is difficult to gauge. Some of the issues discussed during the conference are currently under consideration in committees, but have not yet come to a vote. One major effort has been to get workmen's compensation for farm workers, and there is currently a bill under consideration that would extend this protection to them and another which would increase compensation benefits across the board. The State Department of Labor and Industries has already taken administrative action that brings 40 percent of the farm workers under workmen's compensation, which includes all fruit and hops pickers. To bring the other 60 percent under protection would triple the budget of the department, and current funding is inadequate to support such an increase without legislative action. Three bus loads of migrant workers and farmers from eastern Washington, organized by the local antipoverty agency, have come to Olympia to testify for the workmen's compensation bill, as well as for a housing bill to set up a regional housing development corporation and for a bill extending the minimum wage law. The state department of health passed regulations tightening the codes for housing in migrant camps, and poor people have testified at hearings against a resolution now under House consideration which would withdraw the improved restrictions.

Other bills of concern to poor people in the current session include a bill authorizing funds for OEO to develop state-wide tutor-aid programs; another which allows counties to appoint public defenders and requires them to do so where the population is over 35,000; a bill allowing low-income tenants to deduct some repair costs from their rents; and a neighborhood assistance bill allowing tax credits to business firms for locating in impoverished areas.

With poor people now talking to local politicians and sending delegations to Olympia and studying proposed legislation—Washington's poor people have gone a long way toward answering affirmatively the question: can poor people help themselves?

"Your presence here is proof positive that community action and citizen participation are here to stay."

'thank you Upward Bound'

By SHERRY BRASHEAR

College freshman, Eastern Kentucky University

In early June of my fifteenth year I left my home in the mountains to go down into the flatlands for two months. Up until then, my longest absences from home had been weekends spent at my grandmother's home.

In the car of my guidance counselor, I was swept away from Mason's Creek and wading the branch, from bringing the cows down out of the hills to be milked, and from family bean-stringings. I was removed from a close family relationship into a highly impersonal college atmosphere. And it was a very long time before the college could provide any entertainment that would compensate for the folktales my father spun for us on summer nights.

As we traveled out of the mountains, I felt I was being moved by an uncontrollable tide of circumstances. I could hear, faintly, in the back of my mind, the sound of my mother's voice calling our cow and the indistinct swishing of the early-morning grass against bare feet. I did not know that the rustling sound of corn stalks in the morning breeze would be replaced by the bustling sound of dozens of college students heaving tired bodies out of bed to the tune of countless alarm clocks. I never realied that the tinkle of old Boss's bell would be replaced by the urgent warning of class alarms, and arriving at a huge campus, a girl who had attended a school of five hundred students, I felt alone and amazed.

The contrast between the world I was removed from, and the world I entered, was totally bewildering. As I stood in the lobby of modern Sidney Clay Hall, surrounded by the collection of battered, scarred luggage, I tried to call to mind one thing that would link the home I had left to this new place.

My first reaction to the idea of Upward Bound was stark, utter amazement, I could not believe it. I had begun to doubt hopes of higher education, but I knew I wanted that college education. But college seemed out of my reach, since I was the eldest of ten children. It seemed to be too good to be true, all of it. Nevertheless, I filled out the application forms and dreamed of ten-dollar allowances, rain on grey concrete and beautiful college men. But I never believed my dreams would achieve reality.

Three summers have elapsed since then, and I am still a member of Upward Bound. This fall I will attend Eastern on a loan and a scholarship grant. I have my visions still, but at last I have learned that if I try hard enough, I can make them more than dreams.

Upward Bound has taught me many things. The most important lesson I've learned is how to associate with people: I need never fear them again. I have learned to appreciate my unique mountain culture. I have learned to love, in depth, my home.

As Thomas Wolfe said, "You can't go home again." But I can take Mason's Creek with me wherever I go, like a shield of faith.

I can assay people for their worth as individuals and not for their skin color or their parents' place of birth. I have begun to evaluate my environment of bootlegging and bigotry with a tongue-in-cheek humor, rather than with a critical eye. I do not mind that people accuse me of not being accustomed to wearing shoes. Shoes aren't the measure of a person, nor is a torn screen door, or a hound dog on the porch, or fried potatoes for breakfast.

A person, a real person, is one who remains stable and sedate in the crisis of people running to and fro, predicting the downfall of mankind. Sandburg was right, and who can dispute him. "Man will yet win." And I feel I, too, have a chance to win. I can step proudly to the music that I hear. I can thank Project Upward Bound for giving me this pride, and for making Sher Brashear and so many others, "real persons."

Three years ago, Sherry Brashear, a high school sophomore in Jeff, Ky., was recruited into Upward Bound by Eastern Kentucky University. The first thing that struck Sherry's fancy at Eastern was a brand new library. "It was just full of all kinds of books," says Sherry, "and I went wild." The elementary school and high school back home had no libraries at all.

After three years in Upward Bound, Miss Brashear, 18, is well on her way to being a polished and accomplished young lady. Now a freshman at Eastern Kentucky, she is majoring in speech and drama. With the help of a local reporter who interviewed her about her experiences in Upward Bound, a sampling of Sherry's poems and stories were printed in the Hazard (Ky.) Herald and a small magazine called "Shout." That small exposure brought letters from such far away places as Canada, France and Germany. Sherry says, "For the first time I began to realize that there were a lot of wonderful people in the world."

Asked if she would have gotten to college without Upward Bound, Sherry gushes: "Upward Bound was just like a miracle. Scholarships didn't exist at my high school, and it probably would have been impossible for me to find one on my own."

Her family could not afford the cost of a college education. Sherry is the oldest of 10 children, and is very proud of her family's team spirit in working a small mountain farm in Perry County, where they raise their own food and livestock. Sherry's father, a machinist for mining operators, is taking night courses through another antipoverty program to get a high school diploma.

Sherry is now paid through College Work-Study for working 14 hours a week in the University library. The remainder of her tuition and room and board expenses are financed from an Educational Opportunity Grant and a loan from the National Defense Education Act.

Sherry already has a lot to say and her thoughts come bubbling out one on top of the other. She chose drama because "it's a way to get to say things to people."

What good, if any, is Community Action?

Does Community Action work? Or is it a failure? With nearly 1,000 Community Action Agencies in all sections of the country, and with 5,000 delegate agencies under them, it is not easy to come up with a categorical answer. Some CAAs have done a professional job of mobilizing the community to fight poverty. Some have not. Some have been quiet and docile (and ineffective). Some have tried to fight City Hall. Some are controlled by City Hall. Because of the Green Amendment, every community action agency still in existence has been examined and officially designated by the local city or county government. One of the virtues of Community Action is that each community can find its own way, its own solution. President Nixon, in his poverty message to Congress, said "the vital Community Action Programs will be pressed forward."

There is growing evidence that CAAs are successfully accomplishing their goals—delivering services and improving the community's response to the poor. Some 20 million people have been served by or have participated in one or more CAA programs since 1965. Some 3.5 million a year are served through 2,600 neighborhood centers. Here are some additional facts:

■ CAAs have achieved major improvement in the response of local institutions to the specific needs of poor citizens. The first phase of a survey by three private research firms found that nearly two out of three (64 percent) of CAAs in cities of more than 50,000 people played a vital role in improving the way in which employment, education and welfare agencies serve the poor. The kinds of change found include creation of special school programs for poor children, new employment service efforts to seek out the hard-core poor, fairer and less restrictive eligibility policies for welfare. The firms conducting the survey in 50 cities for the OEO are the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago; Kirschner Associates, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and U. S. Research and Development Corporation, New York.

■ CAAs have generated new local government and privately-sponsored programs—health, employment and food programs meeting serious needs that were previously neglected. These efforts are financed by local resources. This was a major finding in a sample survey OEO conducted through the regional offices.

The OEO survey tended to confirm and supplement the finding of the private research firms. It found that CAAs filled a unique role. They uncovered and documented needs; brought them to the attention of local agencies; provided the information, technical help, outreach to neighborhoods, the manpower and sometimes the funds to start a program. The San Diego story elsewhere in this issue draws a detailed picture of this phenomenon. In Nassau County, New York, the CAA prompted a private hospital to put up funds for a Neighborhood Health Center for the poor. In Windham, Connecticut, the CAA supplied funds and helped several townships meet the cost of starting a coordinated food distribution program, with space and equipment donated by private agencies. In Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, the CAA provided the means for the state employment service to open an office in its three county area by paying salaries of personnel. After the employment service saw there was a need for such an office, it took over the cost from the CAA.

■ CAAs have vastly improved the delivery of public services to the people. Where local agencies seemed unable to do the job, CAAs have brought government closer to the people who need it the most and understand it the least. They have helped to refine and perfect the operation of government in a democratic society. They have made government responsive to millions of middle class citizens as well. CAAs have improved the delivery of services through decentralization of programs to neighborhoods with outreach efforts to find those who need help; prompted welfare, employment, and other agencies to keep offices open nights and weekends, making services available to millions who cannot get there during the day; and have linked services of different agencies through Neighborhood Service Centers. In Phoenix, the CAA obtained a neighborhood facilities grant to open a one-stop neighborhood center offering the services of nineteen federal, state, city and private agencies, including the city manager's office.

■ CAAs have given poverty communities new participation in the democratic process. They have built and helped neighborhood councils which make it possible for indigenous leaders to develop. Neighborhood organizations enable the people to participate in the planning and operation of programs affecting their lives. Neighborhood councils have won the recognition and respect of public officials and are consulted on actions involving their areas. In Louisville, the CAA's ten neighborhood councils have been recognized as official spokesmen for their neighborhoods. Local public agencies are required to clear proposed actions through the councils. As a result, many public services have been decentralized and residents participate in the decisions of the Board of Education.

Where others have failed, CAAs are helping perfect the institutions in a democratic society.

In Milwaukee, a neighborhood organization of welfare recipients has had a major influence on the welfare department's policies. Listen to what the public welfare director said about it:

The welfare organization "is very eloquent in citing situations that need changing" and is "performing real service in helping the welfare administration understand more completely the human side of being a recipient."

NEWSLINE

CAP

Nixon keeps OEO, shifts Head Start, Job Corps

President Nixon has decided that the Office of Economic Opportunity should be relieved of some of its established programs and should put a stronger emphasis on its function as a laboratory for social experiment and change. He said the agency's mission carries the freedom to fail as well as the challenge to succeed as it seeks new answers to poverty.

He urged Congress to continue OEO another year and promised to deliver a long range poverty message, probably later this year.

The President made his recommendations in a message on poverty ordering that two major programs—Head Start and Jobs Corps—be delegated to other federal agencies effective July 1 and that preparations be made for later transfer of the Comprehensive Health Centers and Foster Grandparents programs to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

HEW will gain control over the Head Start program while Job Corps will be delegated to the Department of Labor.

"The OEO has been a valuable fount of ideas and enthusiasm," Mr. Nixon said as he announced the proposed changes. He said that the agency would, in the future, be seen as a type of incubator for experimental programs.

"OEO's greatest value is as an initiating agency—devising new programs to help the poor, and serving as an 'incubator' for these programs during their initial, experimental phases. One of my aims is to free OEO itself to perform these functions more effectively, by providing for a greater concentration of its energies on its innovative role," the President said.

The delegation of Head Start and Job Corps to older agencies means that money for these programs will be appropriated to OEO and then passed along to the operating agency. This is similar to the arrangement that has been used in the Neighborhood Youth Corps and other manpower programs.

But the President left open the possibility that Head Start could be transferred to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, thus severing any OEO connection with the program.

After announcing these changes, the President made clear his commitment to the Community Action program and said that the cuts should not harm existing CAAs. ". . . It is my intent that Community Action Agencies can continue to be involved in the operation of such programs as Head Start at the local level, even though an agency other than OEO has received such programs, by delegation, at the national level."

The President announced his intention to crusade for better management in CAAs. "When poverty-fund monies are stolen, those hurt most are the poor—whom the monies were meant to help," he said, noting that the "Concentrated Management Improvement Program initiated in OEO will be intensified.

In making OEO a harbor for experimental programs, the President emphasized that the agency should not be criticized when these ideas fail. "If we are to make the most of experimental programs, we must frankly recognize their experimental nature and frankly acknowledge whatever shortcomings they develop. To do so is not to belittle the experiment, but to advance its essential purpose. . . ."

"The men and women who will be valued most in this administration will be those who understand that not every experiment succeeds, who do not cover up failures but rather lay open problems, frankly and constructively, so that next time we will know how to do better," he added.

In a memo to OEO employees, Acting Director Bertrand Harding said "I think we all can take considerable satisfaction from its recognition of the value of our efforts over the past 4½ years and of the job yet to be done."

"I am proud of the performance of all of you during these uncertain times," he added.

CAP/Legal Services

Legal aides suggested

New types of legal aides, comparable to the paraprofessionals trained in Neighborhood Health Centers, have been recommended as a solution to the Legal Services case overload problem.

A study made by the National Institute for Justice and Law recommended that two new jobs—divorce specialist and claims adjuster—be created. Legal Services offices would provide training that would enable neighborhood residents to fill the new positions.

In addition, the study called for the creation of three other paraprofessional legal jobs: investigator, caseworker and neighborhood worker. These people would inform their community about the Legal Services program and try to resolve problems before they reached the courts.

A conservative yardstick shows that only two percent of poor people with legal problems are being served by the Legal Services program. By allowing paraprofessionals to take over some of the more mechanistic chores now assigned to lawyers, the study argues, lawyers would be able to handle more cases.

Family welfare limit upset

A Maryland welfare regulation limiting the maximum payment to families receiving Aid to Dependent Children funds has been voided by a special three-judge Federal Court.

The panel ruled that the regulation penalizes large families. The rule set by the State Welfare Board held that two-parent households with four children could not receive a higher payment when their next child arrived. The same was true of a family that included five children but had only one parent present. The maximum amount was $250 monthly in Baltimore, where the plaintiffs reside, and $240 in the rest of the state.

The State Welfare Board issued the rule after the General Assembly failed

to appropriate sufficient funds to carry out state welfare programs. A welfare official suggested that the court decision could result in a two percent across-the-board welfare cut.

Maryland's rule is not unique. There are similar regulations in 27 other states. Challenges are underway in four of these states.

The Maryland suit was argued by Legal Aid East, part of Baltimore's Legal Aid Bureau. A representative of the group said about 2500 families would be affected by the decision.

Legal Aid East contended that a family that remained together would be forced to go without sufficient food, clothing or heat unless they received greater benefits.

The regulation could encourage the breakup of families, the court noted. One of the plaintiff families includes eight children, the oldest of whom was 11, and would have been eligible for payments of $331.50 monthly had it not been for the maximum rule. They received only $250 a month.

The court noted that if this family had placed two of the children with relatives, each child would be eligible for payments of $65 monthly and the remainder of the family would continue to receive a $250 monthly payment.

Supreme Court aids tenants

The Supreme Court considered three tenant eviction cases in January and resolved each in favor of the tenant. In the single case involving public housing, the Court ruled that a federal regulation issued after the case arose protected the North Carolina resident from eviction.

The Court also let stand two cases involving private housing in the District of Columbia. In each of these cases, tenants had won previously.

One case, **Thorpe v. Housing Authority of the City of Durham** (N. C.), involved a resident of public housing, Joyce C. Thorpe, who was threatened with eviction the day after she was elected president of a tenant union in her apartment. Now the Court has declared that a rule issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1967 applies to her case.

Mrs. Thorpe was represented by the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

The second case involves a Washington, D. C., woman, Yvonne Edwards, who was threatened with eviction after she complained to the city about code violations in her rented house. Inspectors responding to her complaint found more than 40 code violations and landlord Nathan Habib was ordered to repair them. He responded by sending Mrs. Edwards an eviction notice.

In May 1968, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that a landlord had no right to evict a tenant in retaliation for complaints about code violation. Now the Supreme Court has let this decision stand.

The Court also left standing another District of Columbia eviction case. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled last February that the lease on the apartment was an invalid contract because the landlord, at the time the lease was signed, knew that code violations existed on the premises.

The tenant, Lillie Brown, had been evicted after the original court decision. The Southall Realty Company began eviction proceedings after Mrs. Brown fell behind in her rent. At the time of the court action, she owed $230.

Mrs. Brown contended that no rent was due under the lease because it was an illegal contract.

The Court of Appeals agreed. "To uphold the validity of this lease agreement, in light of the defects known to be existing on the leasehold prior to the agreement (i.e., obstructed commode, broken railing, and insufficient ceiling height in the basement), would be to flout the evident purposes" of the relevant code sections, the court held.

Poor relieved of ad bill

New York City must pay newspaper publication costs for indigents seeking divorce, a State Supreme Court justice has ruled.

Justice Nathan R. Sobel handed down the decision in a case argued by Stephen Wizner, a Mobilization for Youth lawyer, on behalf of Helen Jeffries. Justice Sobel said the publication requirement could create a situation where poor people could be denied recourse in the courts in divorce cases if the City did not pay the advertising bill.

"We have erected by statute a money hurdle to marital dissolution by requiring in many circumstances the services of a summons by publication. The loss of access to the courts in an action for divorce is a right of substantial magnitude when only through the courts may redress or relief be obtained," he wrote.

Generally a person seeking a divorce publishes a notice in two newspapers for four consecutive weeks if the spouse cannot be served personally with a summons. In the case decided the publication costs were $300.

CAP/Head Start

Pre-school study planned

Head Start and the Educational Testing Service have selected four areas for an extended study of poor pre-school children. About 2200 children will be involved in the project.

The six-year study will be carried out in Portland, Ore. St. Louis, Trenton and Lee County, Ala. Entitled "The Longitudinal Study of Disadvantaged Children and Their First School Experience," it will follow the selected group of children from the age of 3½ until they reach the third grade. This should be in 1973 or 1974.

The study will attempt to discover how various types of education, including Head Start, aid the child's growth.

CAP/Indians

Indian Action in Arizona

If you've seen an old western movie on TV, you've probaly noticed an old fort of Spanish-type architecture, perched on the bank of a river, with high, tiny windows in the smooth thick

walls, and wondered if it was a movie set.

It is real. It is old Fort Yuma, territorial border and cavalry post.

On the California side of the Colorado River, just across from Yuma, Ariz., the old fort still stands, but with a new look. This is the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation, where over 3500 members of the Quechan Indian Tribe live.

The governing body of the Quechans is the nine-member Tribal Council, democratically elected by the tribe. The Tribal Council has appointed a four member Community Action Committee which maintains a CAP office where staff members are available on a daily basis to all residents of the reservation.

In 1965, soon after economic opportunity programs became available, the Council and representatives of the communities on the reservation sat down together and asked themselves what community action programs were most needed on the reservation. They decided that remedial reading, health education, home enrichment and preschool were the necessary first programs. They planned their course of action, applied for and received an OEO grant and proceeded to administer the programs. Each year the programs have improved and expanded.

Then they made long-range plans. They decided the economic and employment potential of the reservation had to be improved and something must be done to attract the tourist traffic.

In May, 1966, a community betterment and beautification program was made available to reservations. Their initial plan was to tear down the old dilapidated, run-down buildings in the fort.

Then they decided that if the buildings, grounds, and soil were improved, it could be the answer to developing part of the economic potential of the reservation. They started to preserve, restore and beautify the old fort. Thirty unemployed unskilled men were hired. They divided into crews to improve the access roads, lay sidewalks, repair interior floors and walls and generally renovate the fort.

Today the building houses a community center, Head Start center, library, credit union, employment assistance office, repair shop and a tribal museum. While this was going on, the men learned skills in carpentry, plumbing and other trades which now enable them to earn substantial wages in nearby communities.

For three years they worked hard. The success of the community action programs led to an OEO incentive grant. Here, at last, was a way to implement more of their long-range plans.

With the grant for $127,000, they all pitched in, donated labor, land and materials and built a 74-place trailer park with an adjacent shopping complex. This provides a profit for the tribe and gives steady employment for some residents who now earn annual incomes of less than $1,000 each.

Just as important, however, is for the first time, an opportunity for individual Indians to operate their own business. There will be a grocery store, barber shop, beauty shop, liquor store and laundromat, to serve the tourists in the trailer park—all owned and operated by Quechan Indians.

CAP/Migrants

Arizona child development program

Since 1965 the Migrant Opportunity Program has operated ten child development centers in rural areas of Arizona. The program is sponsored by the Arizona Council of Churches.

Each center cares for from 30 to 60 children daily during hours when parents are working in the fields. Initially the centers were open all year. To allow time for undisturbed staff training the program was reduced to eleven months.

The program's health services include physical examinations, immunizations, and treatment for the ailments prevalent among migrant children (pediculosis, impetigo, anemia, and respiratory infections), infant care, and nutrition.

Breakfast, hot lunch and two snacks are served daily.

Training programs are conducted by colleges near the centers for center staffs. Some of the seasonal farm labor women employed as aides in the centers have received several hundred hours of training. One has so improved her knowledge and skill she has recently been appointed director of a center. Several are enrolled in college courses.

Each center has a parents' advisory committee and a parent group that meets periodically for pot-luck suppers, educational programs, and money-raising events to provide desired items for the center.

A total of 3121 children have participated in the program.

Migrant children get HEP

Herman Miller's book, "Rich Man, Poor Man," says that a high school diploma is worth between $40,000 to $60,000 over a working lifetime.

Statistics show that one of the groups with the highest school dropout rate is the 17-to-22-year-old children of migrant and seasonal farm workers. Handicapped by a language barrier, traveling from place to place, never a part of any established community, being made fun of by their peers because of the clothing they have to wear, their inexperience and sometimes inarticulateness, their high dropout rate is constant.

To help part of this group, the Migrant Division of OEO designed the HEP program.

This program is being conducted by 13 colleges and universities. Students live on the campus, attend special HEP courses, and are tutored by undergraduate tutor-counselors. After receiving their high school diploma, they may enter a vocational training program, go into a job, or continue their studies as college preparatory or university students.

Vocational training courses include data processing, auto mechanics, aircraft mechanics, electronics, licensed practical nursing, machine, electrical and welding trades, accounting, carpentry, journalism, office procedures,

teacher-library aides, general business and drafting technology.

During the eleven months they are on campus, they use physical education, student union and library facilities. This is something they thought would never be within their reach, but will help motivate them to continue their learning.

CAP/Rural

New jobs for Virginians

The company bought the buses.

The CAP supplied the workers.

And so 250 rural poor people have been hired by a Morton Frozen Food plant in Crozet, Va. The plant is located more than 50 miles from rural Fluvanna, Buckingham, and Goochland counties where the new employees live. The two buses leased by the company make three round trips to get them to their jobs.

Central Virginia Community Action Agency organized Project Enable with the help of William Trainum, personnel manager at the Morton plant. The CAA arranged for job interviews to be held in the community, close enough for some people to walk to an interview for the first time in their lives. With each new group of prospective applicants, the CAP manpower supervisor, Lorraine Whitaker, held a pre-interview session, where she went through the application forms and company rules to speed up the interviews.

Trainum or his assistant came to the neighborhood center where the interviews were held and brought a company nurse to take medical histories and give eye exams. James Bowles, a local physician on the CAA board, gave up his day off to conduct the required physical examination at the same time.

This cooperative program began in August 1968, in Fluvanna County and has since expanded to two other counties included in the six-county area of Central Virginia CAA. Most of the people employed through Project Enable had been working at low-paying jobs as domestics, pulp mill workers, or farm workers. One woman had been a motel maid for over twelve years at $7 a week. At the unionized Morton plant, wages begin at $1.73 an hour for women and $1.78 for men.

Eva and Harold Wright both began working on the midnight shift at Morton's in October. By December they had saved enough money to purchase a used mobile home, and moved into it a week before Christmas.

Another family has plans to build a house and is saving to buy land.

Nutrition plan tested in Ga.

How much malnutrition is there in Taliaferro County, Ga., where the per capita income is less than $680, and what is the most effective way to fight it? What is the relationship between the diet of the poor and their serious ailments? These are some of the questions a six-month food stamp and nutrition education research program funded by OEO's Emergency Food and Medical program now underway in Taliaferro County hopes to answer.

The project also promoted the first cooperation across race lines in the county since a bitter school segregation fight more than three years ago.

More than 850 low-income citizens of the county waited in line to register for their physicals at the Taliaferro County Emergency Food Center in Crawfordville, where they were examined by a 40-man medical team from Meharrie Medical College in Nashville, Tenn.

Some came in cars and buses. Others made it by foot. Many parents returned the long journey home to bring their children when they discovered that the examinations could include the kids.

The medical examinations at the beginning and end of the project will measure what effect the six-month effort of food stamp distribution, nutrition education in schools, churches and homes, a school lunch program for the children, and a meal program for the elderly, will have on the poor. Part of the research is to be coordinated with the National Nutrition survey of the U.S. Public Health Service.

With its interracial local staff working to benefit all poor in the county, the program may become an avenue through which the black and white citizens of the county will learn to work together.

Taliaferro County is 68 percent Negro and has an unemployment rate of almost 71 percent. The population fell 12.5 percent between 1960 and 1966 and is currently 3,370 persons with 2,300 of these living below the poverty line.

While conducting the examination, Dr. O. C. Simpson of Fort Valley State College, director of the medical research part of the project, said, "We have observed here what we are certain is evidence of malnutrition."

Previously only 157 persons from the poverty population were using food stamps. Now outreach aides travel throughout the county enrolling the poor in the food stamp program. For those who cannot afford to buy food stamps, the stamps will be supplied free.

The Southern Rural Action, Inc., an Atlanta based private nonprofit agency directed by Randolph T. Blackwell, wrote the proposal. Mrs. Essie Bell Curtis of Montezuma, Ga., is field director of the project.

Appalachian happening

Ohio University's Associated Student Volunteers, with an assist from area VISTAs, helped the forgotten people of Appalachia "do their thing" and made money to provide legal services to the poor in southeastern Ohio.

It was an Appalachian Happening held in Athens where many townspeople and university students are unaware of the surrounding poverty which practically sits on their doorsteps. It drew more than 500 people for an evening of mountain music, poetry and stories. Sculpture, quilting and woodworking handicrafts, brought in from the hills of Ohio and West Virginia, were exhibited and sold.

Don West, a minister, poet, historian and a member of the Folklife Center in Pipestem, W. Va., told the history of Appalachia from its days of grandeur and wealth, through its present disunity, poverty and scarred landscape.

NEWSLINE

As the evening of square dancing and folk singing continued, one of the men from "out there" rose and spoke his piece: "We are gettin' nothin' . . . the State Legislature up in Columbus won't listen to us . . . welfare around here won't give us any more . . . we're going to Columbus and we're going to stay until they do somethin'." The audience gave him thunderous applause.

The ASVs started back in 1966 with a handful of young people on the campus concerned with poverty in their area of Appalachia. At first, they worked without funds. When they became an accredited student organization, they received money from the Student General Funds. Tutoring slow learners and Head Start tots, helping elderly poor repair their dwellings, directing isolated poor to needed services and vice versa, are some of their activities.

Most of the 300 ASVs come from cities like Cleveland and Cincinnati. Their influence is felt on campus. They were responsible for a new course in the curriculum—Appalachian Studies. John Mathews, Assistant Director of the Institute of Regional Development, is their supervisor.

Donations are sought for an Appalachian Legal Aid Fund which will hire a lawyer to defend the poor in southeastern Ohio. Donors can mail contributions to ASV, c/o United Campus Ministry, 18 North College Street, Athens, Ohio.

One ASV said of the happening: "We want to get Ohio University students and Athens residents involved in the social crisis in this country. We want to raise money for a legal aid program. We want to build an appreciation for the culture of this area. We figure this is a good way to do it."

Many reached in Detroit

More than a hundred thousand people received services from Detroit's Community Development Centers, reported Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, as he reviewed the progress made by that city's Community Action Agency, the Mayor's Committee for Human Resources Development, in 1968.

He added that:

- 17,000 inner city residents were provided with employment,
- 156,558 patients received health care services, and
- 300 families benefited from homemaker and home management services.

New 'discount' stores in Harlem

Harlem's poor, long victimized by stores offering "cheap" credit and "easy" terms, now have two real discount stores to patronize, but they'll have to pay cash on the line.

The two new enterprises, a furniture store and a meat and fish shop, will be owned by the community. They are parts of the Cooperative Association of East Harlem which has offered some 20,000 shares of stock, at $5 a share, to the community. If the businesses prosper, the stock will pay a dividend. And a good year could bring a price rebate to customers who are not stockholders.

The first store to open, in the pre-Christmas season, was a toy store which later turned into the furniture operation. Items sold at the store are marked up 75 percent over cost. In most downtown stores, the markup is 100 percent and in other Harlem stores it can vary from 150 to 300 percent.

The meat and fish store opened early in 1969. It is adjacent to a public housing project that houses 10,000, but has no stores nearby. The store's staff received five weeks of training from Meat Masters, a black-owned meat market. During training, they received stipends from the Cooperative Association which received the money from the New York Institute for Consumer Education and Development. This group is funded by OEO as a national demonstration project.

The next project for the Harlem co-op will be a credit union.

Some Congressmen take an active interest in their constituents—even if they won't be able to vote for a few more years. Here Rep. Harold T. Johnson visits the Head Start program in Susanville, Calif. Answering the Congressman's question about her age is Susan Johnson, 4. Also seated at the table is Camilla Collins, Head Start coordinator for the four-county program run by the Community Action Agency, Inc.

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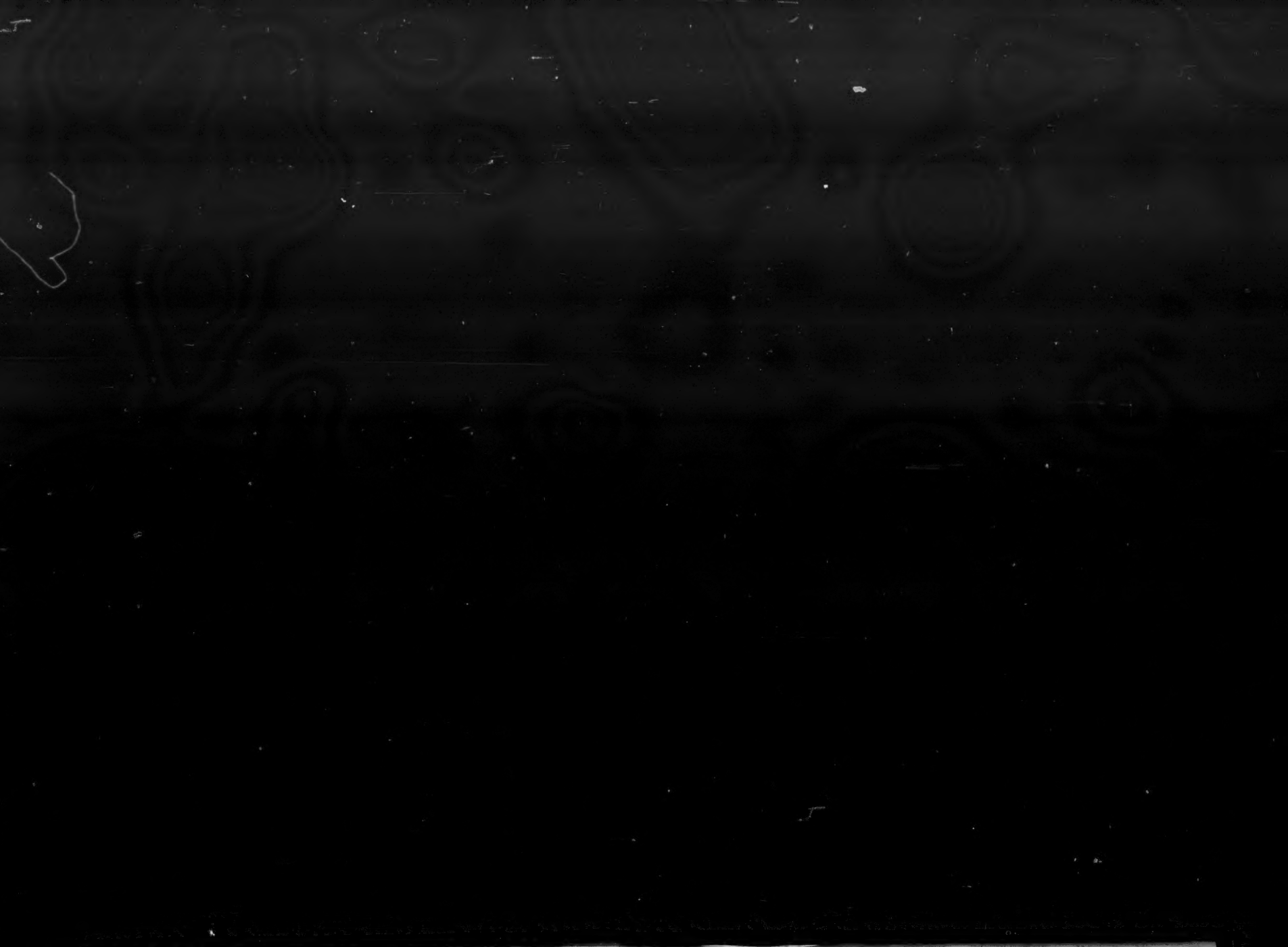
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